

ADDRESS

OF

ALFRED WEEKS, M. D.

TO THE

Grand Temple of Pennsylvania,

OF THE ORDER OF THE

TEMPLE OF HONOR AND TEMPERANCE,

ON BEING INSTALLED

GRAND WORTHY TEMPLAR,


MAY 16, 1856.

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PHILADELPHIA.  
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1856.



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## ADDRESS.

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BROTHERS :

The high position to which your partial voices have called me, however unworthy I may be thereof, impresses me still more seriously with a sense of the solemn obligations assumed by our fraternity. It brings vividly before me my own duties as a man, a christian and a member of this most noble of all benevolent organizations. I tender you my heartfelt thanks for this testimonial of your confidence and esteem, and while I fear that I can add no lustre to the office, I can only pledge myself, that its honor shall not become tarnished in my keeping, and that the high and responsible duties will be faithfully performed to the best of my abilities.

The great cause in which we are enlisted, is as noble a one as ever Knight put lance in rest to champion ; it has fields of conquest and renown more glorious, and triumphs more honorable, and time enduring than any on which embattled hosts ever sought through fields of bloody carnage to win the wreath of victory ! We go forth armed in a great cause to fight for human rights and human freedom—aye ! freedom from the shackles of tyrannical custom, and the unchecked vices of habit. Our object is to make men both better and happier ; to win back for them the proud heritage of pure thoughts, high feelings and noble purposes, which through God's benignant edict was their birthright ! We are taught to deal kindly with his faults and seek to win him to a truer and nobler life.



An organization whose object is thus holy, must succeed and prosper, and yield a full harvest of honor to all engaged in it. Read the motto on the banner under which we rally, the staff of which rests on the rock of TEMPERANCE. First, TRUTH, the eternal principle of life, and strength, and health, moral as well as physical—a ray of that light which surrounds God's immaculate throne, in which nothing impure can live:—TRUTH! that principle which properly appreciated in all its beauty and all its power might go forth ALONE and redeem the world from sin and suffering. Then LOVE, the sweet charm of social intercourse, the golden chain which binds men in that concord which is harmony and happiness, whose bright links stretch from TIME to ETERNITY! It is the leading element of the Almighty's power—it surpasseth all understanding—at creation's dawn it sprang into existence, and through prophetic ages down to its culminating point on Calvary's Mount, when its bright effulgence overspread the world, its influence has chastened and redeemed man from the corruptions of sin. It is an obligation resting imperatively upon him, to be exemplified in all the relations of life—in his duty to his Maker, to the wife of his bosom—to the children he has been blessed with, to society in general, and to his fellow man, wherever he may be found. Without it, wealth, honor and refinement are but as dust in the balance, with it, the humblest of God's creatures are armed with a power capable of effecting most mighty achievements in the amelioration of his race. And then PURITY, the white and spotless garment which makes our lives so beautiful; and which is, everywhere, on mountain top and grassy plain, in the crystal stream and the gentle dew drop, emblematic of that presence, which is encompassed by the redeemed of earth, whose songs of praise will continue forever and forever! And then FIDELITY, which for ourselves is like the mariner's compass on the trackless ocean, the only safe guide for our fellow men, the only true bond of social union! Yes, TRUTH, LOVE, PURITY and FIDELITY, with such soul stirring sentiments to guide him, who would falter in the glorious work? No one among you, my brothers! I am sure, my association with you enables me to bear humble, but sincere testimony of your earnest and untiring labors in the great cause. Let us move onward then, with renewed energy and firm reliance, and the love of good men, with God's approval, will cheer and animate and reward us!

The occasion scarcely affords time for any lengthened discourse upon the objects, principles and duties of our organization; but I have the consolation to know, that you understand and appreciate these better already than I could teach them. One or two however, I will glance at, as having occasioned some objection to our order outside and some doubt and discontent within.

It appears to me, that the object of secrecy is not fairly understood, or it would not be so often objected to in benevolent and reformatory associations. If the purpose of secrecy was fraud and deceit, then it could not be too loudly reprobated, but where it is merely defensive and conservatory it is a sacred right, an inestimable privilege which appertains to us individually, and which associations have as good a claim to enjoy as persons. Every man who lives under institutions derived from the Magna Charta, the great palladium of Anglo Saxon liberty, claims and exercises, the right to make his house his castle, to forbid entrance to the stranger; while around his own hearth he holds his family council, none are admitted, unless indeed they bring testimonials of friendship and fidelity, and then the privilege they enjoy is only permissive; thus carefully does the law guard every family in the sacred precincts of its own home from espial and unfriendly influences. Now, these are all the rights of secrecy we exercise to guard our institution from dishonest and subtle foes, who if they were always permitted to know our views and plans, would often be enabled to embarrass and defeat them; that we have such enemies is undoubted, and so must every association which goes forth to battle with *vice*, and against such I say we have the right to guard ourselves as you would guard your door against the midnight robber and incendiary. We have also our signs, pass words and grips, but it is now well understood that they are not for mystery, but only to prevent imposition.

Some question has arisen in regard to degrees, and it is asked why, when all are laboring in a good cause, one is distinguished above another? No degree in our order is intended really to elevate one brother above another. It is only a recognition of merit, and this idea in conferring them, should never in my view, be departed from. We are taught, and rightly so, in this glorious Republic, that all men are born free and equal, but the healthy existence of society require that merit should be dis-



tinguished, and I have often thought that our political constitution, if, while striking down privilege, it had made some provision to elevate merit, would have been more perfect. It is only then for the recognition of merit, that those who have served with ability in subordinate stations in the Order and by which they are entitled to these distinctions, may be elevated to higher and of course more responsible positions.

And now, my brothers, in connection with the great object of our labor and Order, and the means by which this is to be accomplished, I beg to say a few words. I am opposed to the doctrine of *coercion*, not that I do not believe there is any efficacy in the power of legal enactments, but that I have *more* faith in the magic of kindness and in the power of persuasion. Experience has taught me that men can be won by the gentle power of persuasion and love, much more effectually than by compulsion and restraint, and this appears to me to be the only course for the Temple of Honor. I have looked over the field of our labors for the last year or two, in this and other States and am led to the conclusion, however unwillingly, that the cause of temperance has not advanced any more rapidly since we entered the lists with the law as a weapon.

The great author of christianity, when He put on mortality, and came on his Heaven directed mission to redeem a fallen world, brought no compulsory statutes in one hand, no sword of chastisement in the other! He did not come backed with power and authority to *compel* obedience, but humbly, with ineffable love on his lips, and resistless persuasion on his tongue, to win men to salvation, and all experience tells us that the law alone never yet suppressed vice,—it is the moral power of kindness, and brotherly love at last which draws men into the paths of virtue and happiness! Rely upon these weapons, Templars of Honor and Temperance, and though the foe be numerous and has fashion, established custom and pecuniary interest in his favor, he will be ultimately overthrown and entirely annihilated. It will take time and untiring perseverance. We must bring before the good and virtuous of community the advantages of our Order, labor for its prosperity in all its departments and success is certain.

These are my views honestly entertained, and I can only say to those who differ with me, let us not spend time in controversy as

to the way of doing good, but go forth together, our only rivalry who shall accomplish most for the amelioration of our kind.

In conclusion, for I must not trespass too far upon your time, let me say a few words in reference to that portion of our Order which is represented by the better and brighter part of creation, and who have added grace and beauty and zeal to our labors. Let me say to all Templars, cherish the interests of the Social Degree, unite with it, and aid it in every possible way, and regard it as one of the main pillars of our glorious Temple. There is much question, especially at the present day, as to the province of woman in the social world; leaving that to be discussed by others, I can safely say that there is one part of her mission none can doubt, there is one right none can deny her—it is to do good, to devote herself to the pious labors of charity and good will. She has an interest in man; the friend, brother, protector, husband, which is indefeasible; and she has in consequence the incontestible right to attempt to make him better, purer, more worthy of the blessing of her mighty, and undying love! Her worth and her influence embellish life, and give to existence its charm, to Society its refinement, and when a foe so relentless and destroying as intemperance invades the Eden of her happiness, who shall deny her the right to aid in its expulsion. Woman can, and has done much in this cause—her power is mighty, though seemingly feeble; persuasion is her own peculiar argument, and one, man seldom resists; the sternest natures are subdued at her will,

“It is said a lion will turn and flee  
From a maid, in pride of her purity,”

and well may the foul monster of intemperance shrink abashed in the holy light of her presence. I appeal to her then to stand by us, yes, I say to the Ladies everywhere, you are the allies we need, and when we win the victory, if our brows wear the wreaths your generous hands confer, *your* hearts shall enjoy the triumph.

Again accept my thanks, and the pledge of my fidelity.

